

Appln No. 09/398,963

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Amendments to the Specification:

Please replace the paragraph beginning on page 1, line 32 through page 2, line 22, with the following rewritten paragraph:

A problem with the V-Chip system, as recognized in an article by T. Atherton, entitled "Living With the V-Chip," The Ottawa Citizen, Entertainment, Section F, pp. F1- F2 (Saturday, March 9, 1996), is that the perceived utility of the V-Chip system to a consumer depends on whether the consumer agrees with the subjective ratings contained in the VBI for most, if not all, programs. The author of this article, who purportedly has been involved in a "Beta-test" of the V-Chip system in Canada, gives two illustrative examples in his article. First, "trash-talk" shows are rated at the lowest possible level for violence and the next lowest level for language and sex categories, even though these shows often contain verbal violence, physical confrontations and graphic verbal sexual discussions. Second, utilizing the overall rating system to exclude this type of program, such as excluding all programs with a rating above PG, results in the blocking out of many programs which the author considers appropriate for viewing and does not wish blocked out, such as the movie Forrest Gump. Although some people may disagree with the author's judgment of the relative harm and worth of particular television programs, the article illustrates, at least, that regardless of how much the ratings providers will be able to adjust and fine tune their ratings system, based upon the majority of consumers' wishes, there will remain a significant portion of the consumer public

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who will disagree with the rating systems and think that whatever exclusion programming they do will block out desirable programs while not blocking out undesirable programs.

Accordingly, improvements on the V-Chip system are needed. One improvement to the V-Chip system is using apparatus and method as described in co-pending U.S. Provisional Patent Application Attorney Docket No. 32068/CAC/G207 60/076,290, filed on February 27, 1998, titled V-Chip Plus: Parental Control Apparatus and Method, the disclosures of which are hereby incorporated by reference as if set forth in full herein.

Please replace the paragraph beginning on page 4, line 17, with the following rewritten paragraph:

FIG. 1 is a schematic showing one embodiment of an apparatus according to the present invention with parental control circuitry embedded in a video cassette recorder;

FIG. 2 is a television screen in PIP format displaying password-based options of the V-Chip Plus + In-Guide User Interface Main Blocking Menu to block programs by Ratings/content codes, Time, Channel, Time Allowance, Pay-Per-View dollar Allowance and individual programs as selected from the program schedule grid guide or by inputting compressed codes such as a PlusCode™ which is a compressed code used by Gemstar Development Corporation's VCRPlus+® systems and which presently appear in television calendars and may be used to identify particular programs; FIG. 1 also displays the Global Block/Unblock option which may be used by the

Master/Administrator to temporarily override blocking instruction to allow unblocked viewing and to then re-establish blocking instructions;

FIG. 3 is a television screen in PIP format displaying a viewer selection from the V-Chip Plus + In-Guide User Interface Main Blocking Menu of the "Set Passwords" option;

FIG. 4 is a television screen in PIP format displaying the V-Chip Plus + In-Guide User Interface "Set Password" interface screen and sample viewer-defined users;

FIG. 5 is a television screen in PIP format displaying the V-Chip Plus + In-Guide User Interface "Set Password" interface screen and a sample viewer-defined password selection;

FIG. 6 is a television screen in PIP format displaying a viewer selection from the V-Chip Plus + In-Guide User Interface Main Menu of the "By Ratings" option;

FIG. 7 is a television screen in PIP format displaying the V-Chip Plus + In-Guide User Interface "By Ratings" interface screen and sample viewer-defined blocking selections;

FIG. 8 is a television screen in PIP format displaying confirmation that Ratings Blocking has been set by RED highlighting on the V-Chip Plus + In-Guide User Interface Main Blocking Menu of the "By Ratings" option;

FIG. 9 is a television screen in PIP format displaying a viewer selection from the V-Chip Plus + In-Guide User Interface Main Blocking Menu of the "By Time" option;

FIG. 10 is a television screen in PIP format displaying the V-Chip Plus + In-Guide User Interface "By Time" interface screen and sample viewer-defined blocking selections;

FIG. 11 is a television screen in PIP format displaying confirmation that Time Blocking has been set by RED highlighting on the V-Chip Plus + In-Guide User Interface Main Blocking Menu of the "By Time" option;

FIG. 12 is a television screen in PIP format displaying a viewer selection from the V-Chip Plus + In-Guide User Interface Main Blocking Menu of the "By Channel" option;

FIG. 13 is a television screen in PIP format displaying the V-Chip Plus + In-Guide User Interface "By Channel" interface screen and sample viewer-defined blocking selections;

FIG. 14 is a television screen in PIP format displaying confirmation that Channel Blocking has been set by RED highlighting on the V-Chip Plus + In-Guide User Interface Main Blocking Menu of the "By Channel" option;

FIG. 15 is a television screen in PIP format displaying a viewer selection from the V-Chip Plus + In-Guide User Interface Main Blocking Menu of the "By Time Allowance" option;

FIG. 16 is a television screen in PIP format displaying the V-Chip Plus + In-Guide User Interface "By Time Allowance" interface screen and sample viewer-defined blocking selections;

FIG. 17 is a television screen in PIP format displaying confirmation that By Time Allowance Blocking has been set by RED highlighting on the V-Chip Plus + In-Guide User Interface Main Blocking Menu of the "By Time Allowance" option;

FIG. 18 is a television screen in PIP format displaying a viewer selection from the V-Chip Plus + In-Guide User Interface Main Blocking Menu of the "By \$ Allowance" option;

FIG. 19 is a television screen in PIP format displaying the V-Chip Plus + In-Guide User Interface "By \$ Allowance" interface screen and sample viewer-defined blocking selections;

FIG. 20 is a television screen in PIP format displaying confirmation that By \$ Allowance Blocking has been set by RED highlighting on the V-Chip Plus + In-Guide User Interface Main Blocking Menu of the "By \$ Allowance" option;

FIG. 21 is a television screen in PIP format displaying a viewer selection from the V-Chip Plus + In-Guide User Interface Main Blocking Menu of the "Global Block/Unblock" option;

FIG. 22 is a television screen in PIP format displaying the V-Chip Plus + In-Guide User Interface "Global Block/Unblock" interface screen and sample viewer input of user identification and password;

FIG. 23 is a television screen in PIP format displaying a sample V-Chip Plus + In-Guide User Interface Main Blocking Menu format that will appear after any Time Allowance or \$ Allowance blocking has been set;

FIG. 24a is a television screen in PIP format displaying an alternative embodiment of the V-Chip Plus + In-Guide User Interface "By Ratings" interface screen for TV Ratings Codes and Content Codes in grid format with sample viewer-defined blocking selections;

FIG. 24b is a television screen in PIP format displaying an alternative embodiment of the V-Chip Plus + In-Guide User Interface "By Ratings" interface screen for MPAA Ratings Codes in grid format with sample viewer-defined blocking selections; and

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FIG. 25 is a television screen in PIP format displaying an alternative embodiment of the V-Chip Plus + In-Guide User Interface "By Time" interface screen and sample viewer-defined blocking selections.

Please replace the paragraph beginning on page 9, line 10, with the following rewritten paragraph:

From the Main Blocking Menu, the viewer can select from options that allow the viewer to block or enable viewing of programs globally, or to block or enable viewing of programs by Ratings/content codes, Time, Channel, Time Allowance, Pay-Per-View dollar Allowance and By Grid Guide Selection from an electronic television program schedule grid guide. Once the viewer has set blocking instructions, the blocking instruction database is updated and is accessed by a program viewing blocking system, such as is claimed in co-pending U.S. Provisional Patent Application Attorney Docket No. 32068/GAG/G207-60/076,290, filed February 27, 1998, titled V-Chip Plus: Parental Control Apparatus and Method, the disclosures of which have been previously incorporated by reference as if set forth in full herein. The program viewing blocking system uses the database program viewing blocking instructions to block a particular user from viewing programs as directed by the blocking instructions.